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ERRORS IN LAST REGISTER.

In page 497—for “*furious*” read *glorious*.
 ——— 498—for “*Dol*” read *Doe*.
 ——— 505—for “*any*” read *marry*.
 ——— for “*guining*” read *gaming*.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Mr. G's Letters are received. Two of them will be sent to America to be published.

Many thanks to Mr. C. for the *gilded ropes*. They shall be taken care of. We should be very happy to see him and his worthy friend, at Botley. He will see what I intend to do with the *gilded ropes*.

TO

COMMODORE DAVID PORTER
 OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY.

Botley, 27th April, 1816.

SIR,—In the last Quarterly Review but one, there was a very base attack upon your character and conduct. In order to convince you, that you ought not to suppose that all my countrymen approved of such vile publications, I inserted, in No. 11 of this Volume, a Letter to the Author, or Editor of that work, whose name is WILLIAM GIFFORD. I there gave an account of this literary hero; but, in my statement of what he received out of our taxes, I was, I find, guilty of an omission, which I now proceed to correct. I said, that he had been rewarded by a sinecure of more than 300*l.* a year, under the title of *Clerk of the Foreign Estreats*, and that he was a *Commissioner of the Lottery*. But, I now find that he has another place; that is, the place of “*Paymaster of the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners*,” at 300*l.* a year. A most suitable office, you will say, for the whipper-in of a set of hired Reviewers! What particular *Band* of pensioners this may be I do not know. Perhaps the whole *Band* may be Reviewers; if so, Sir, I

leave you to guess what a chance the Journal of your celebrated Cruise stood in their hands.

I gave you an account in Number 11 of the conduct of this writer in the cases of Peter Pindar and Anthony Pasquin, and also of the conduct and character of the Judge, Kenyon. In short, I showed what the business of Reviewing really was, in England. But, Sir, I must again beg of you and your countrymen and all foreigners to keep your eye steadily fixed upon this fact, that writers, like MR. GIFFORD, are, in this country, absolutely in *pay* of the government; that is to say, that they live upon the taxes, and, of course, assist in producing pauperism and misery. This is not the case in your country. There a writer, if he get rich, or, if he live by the pen, must receive his income from the people who voluntarily buy his works. Here he need care little about his readers: his *payers* are the only persons that he need care for, or that he does care for. This writer must have known very well how base it was in him to assault your character, in the manner that he did; what a shameful prostitution of talent he was guilty of; but, his mind had, for many years, been made up to that, and had been seared against all reflections of this sort.

You will naturally ask, how we can tolerate, how we can endure, how we can submit, to see our money, raised on us in taxes, and earned with our sweat and almost with our very blood: you will naturally ask, how we can submit to see our money given to a man like this, while we see nearly two millions of paupers overspread the land. If, indeed, he had ever in his whole life time, rendered any sort of service to the country; if he had served, at any time of his life, in the army, the navy, or in any other branch of public business, there might be some excuse for the heaping of these sums of money on him; but, to give to this man, who was a few years ago tutor to LORD BELGRAVE, and who has never been in any kind of public employ, an

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income equal to that of *five or six Lieutenants of the Navy*, is, you will say * * * * * and I would say it too if I dared.

However, Sir, I think I can now defy Mr. GIFFORD's talent at falsehood and deception as far as relates to America; and, if he continue to deceive people here, those people are not to be pitied. He is one of those, whose labours, though they tend to keep up the delusion for a while, will, in the end, make the fall of * * * * *

I have the pleasure to assure you, that every one, whom I have heard speak on the subject, has reprobated the cowardly and viperous attack, made on you by this sinecure assailant; but, strange as *you* will think it, very few persons here know that his statement, which represents the Essex to have been captured by *one* English ship, is a falsehood! There is hardly any one in England, out of the pale of the Admiralty, who does not firmly believe, that you were beaten and captured by the *Phæbe alone*! But, if you could know the state of our press, you would not wonder at this. As to all matters, relating to the war with America, this nation, generally speaking, are nearly as ignorant as are the dogs and the horses. As far, however, as the truth has made its way with regard to your exploits, they have received the admiration which is due to them; and, there are many men in England, amongst whom I am one, who most sincerely wish you health, happiness, and success in your present important employment of adding to the strength of that navy, towards the fame of which you have so largely contributed. We, who entertain these wishes, are very far from desiring to see the power or the fame of our own country diminished. We are for the prosperity and honour of England in preference to those of all the rest of the world. But, we by no means believe, that the overturning of your system of government, that the extinguishing of the example set by you, would tend to the prosperity and honour of England, it being impossible for us to have an idea of national prosperity and honour not accompanied with *real liberty*. In short, we are not beasts enough to believe, that our prosperity, or our honour, would be advanced by our enabling a * * * * * to subjugate *you*; and, therefore, in

every undertaking, which does not tend to the abridgment of the known *rights* of our country, and which do tend to give to freedom power to struggle against, and, finally, to overcome despotism, we most cordially wish you success.—I am, Sir, your most obedient Servant,

WM. CORBETT.

P. S. This very minute I have received a letter from a gentleman in SUSSEX, whom I never had the pleasure to see in my life, informing me, that accident has put into his hands, and that he has forwarded to me, a part of the *gilded ropes*, made use of in the vessels, engaged in the ever memorable *fight on the Serpentine River*, which ropes I will, as soon as possible, most assuredly send to you. Perhaps you may have forgotten the piece of Naval History here referred to. In 1814, when the kings, our allies, were in England, there was a sea fight in miniature contrived, in order to give them an idea of our prowess. The scene was a large pond in one of the parks near London. Here vessels were constructed, guns put on board of them, and every thing else done that was calculated to give the thing the air of reality. The *English Fleet* and the *American Fleet* came to action in fine style; the contest was uncommonly obstinate; but, at last, *poor Jonathan*, was compelled to haul down his "*bits of striped bunting*," and "*submit to our gallant and magnanimous Tars*." At this result of the combat not less, perhaps, than two hundred thousand voices made the air ring with shouts of triumph: while at very nearly the same moment, a whole squadron of real English ships were hauling down their colours to an *inferior* American squadron, commanded by Commodore M'Donnough, on Lake Champlain! We, who really love our *country*, do not think her *honoured* in victories like that of the Serpentine River; nor, though we are always sorry to hear of any of our countrymen being defeated, when we consider them merely as our countrymen, can we * * * * *

GENERAL BROWN.

The article, which, in the last number but one, I published, from the Yankee newspaper, respecting this gentleman, has drawn forth, from an *anonymous* corres-

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pent, a most bitter attack upon the character and conduct of the General. What I shall do, in this case, is this: I will, as soon as possible, send the article, some how or other, to General Brown, leaving him to send me an answer to it, if he think it worth while. For, as to making my work the vehicle of attack on American Officers, while our libel laws would squeeze me half to death, if I were to publish what Americans write against our Officers, I will be guilty of no such baseness. Nay, if this anonymous writer were to publish his attack in another paper, I should not dare *answer* his publication, in the manner in which it ought to be answered. I may attack the American General as much as I please; but I must be very cautious what I say in defending him. Indeed, I dare not defend him, if to his defence any circumstance dishonourable to any English Officer, or person in authority, be necessary to be stated. Thus is any one permitted to fly open-mouthed at the reputation of General Brown, as sinecure *Gifford* has at Commodore Porter; but, in defence of General Brown, a man must keep on a very tight muzzle. To obtain freedom of the press, such as would enable me to utter what I feel on the subject of the *River Raisin, Hampton, Frenchtown, Alexandria, &c.* is out of my power; but, it is completely within my power to prevent my work from being the vehicle of attack, while the means of defence are prohibited. No: corruption has vehicles enough at its absolute command: it would be a shame indeed, if I were to lend my pages to its purposes. In America, if an English Officer be attacked in print, there is a press which dares defend him, and in making that defence, to inculcate, if the case calls for it, any officer, or other person, in America. When this is the case, there ought to be no scruple to insert the attack; and, when my correspondent will obtain the same freedom of the press for me, I will insert his attack on General Brown, which, however, is of so personal and foul a nature, that, under no circumstances, ought it to be published in any country without the *real name* of the author.—However, if this gentleman has really that zeal for the honour of his country, which he professes to have, there is a much larger field for him than the character and conduct of General Brown. I mean, the long

list of charges, contained in the "*American Exposition*," republished by Mr. *Clement*, at 192, Strand, London. This pamphlet, which has been published in London more than eight months, has not yet been noticed in any of our Reviews. I have seen it in *French*. It has been read in all the courts of Europe. If ever there was a publication that called for an *answer*, this is one of that description. Yet, not a word has it drawn forth. I am deceived if there ever was a publication, calculated to do so much mischief to the character of any government as this is calculated to do to the character of ours; and yet, not a word is said in answer to it, or by way of commentary on it. What is the *conclusion*? Now, if the anonymous assailant of General Brown will "*turn to*" and answer this Exposition, what a service will he render! His attack on General Brown will find a place in such answer naturally enough.—Let us live in hopes, then, that we shall see this terrible Exposition answered at last.

WM. COBBETT.

TO THE
PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA.

LETTER X.

Political Parties in England.—What they were formerly.—Change of Public opinion when Mr. Fox came into power.—Conduct of the Foxites.—Both sets upon Mr. Maddocks's motion in 1809.—The sham battles in newspapers.—The Reformers.—Hampden Club.—Political Lawyers.

Botley, 27th April, 1816.

The people of America appear to retain the old notion about *Political Parties* in this country. They seem to think, that the word *Opposition* stands for a set of men, who really disapprove of the measures of the ministry, and who differ from them essentially in certain great *principles* of policy and of government. Mr. MATTHEW CAREY of Philadelphia, who is one of those numerous sons of Erin, who have done honour to the Irish name in his adopted country, and who, under the title of "*The OLIVE BRANCH*," put forth, dur-

ing the late war, a work which produced the most powerful and most beneficial effect. If a gentleman of this description can look upon it that there "always is, in the English House of Commons, a *Court Party* and a *Country Party*," it shows very clearly, that the People of America know very little indeed about our Political Parties, that they carry along in their minds the names and ideas of three or four score years back; and that they stand in need of a great deal of information upon this subject, which is, however, one of considerable importance in the history of these eventful times. In No. 3 of this volume I have given you some account of the *English Parliament*. I have shown you *how it is*, that the Duke of Newcastle, while he was, a few years ago, kicking his heels up in a cradle and feeding upon pap, had more real influence than all the battling debaters put together; but, I have not, so fully as I could wish, explained to you how the Parties really stand at this time, and especially what are the views of those who are called parliamentary *Reformers*, and whose views you will finally, I hope, see carried into complete effect.

The old appellations of *Whig* and *Tory* really have had no application in England for nearly half a century. Since the cause of the Stuarts became completely hopeless, the two parties in parliament have been contending merely for power and emolument. Until Pitt went out of office in 1801, the people in power were called *Pittites*, and those who were seeking for power were called *Foxites*. But, after the medley which composed Addington's administration, after Pitt's return to power with a new and stranger mixture, and especially after the coalition between Fox, Grenville, and Addington, in 1806, all notion about a difference in the principles of any of these parties has been wholly effaced from the minds of the people.

Indeed, the conduct of the *Foxites*, when they came into power, was enough to open the eyes of a people more blind than this, if such a people be to be found upon the face of the earth. In the *coalition itself* there was nothing at all to offend any man of sound sense. For, men who have differed very widely upon certain measures, may very properly co-operate as to other measures. Men who have been very violently opposed to each other may be very honourably reconciled.

Greater experience may convince some of their errors; and the times may imperiously call for unanimity. Therefore, in the coalition itself there was nothing offensive; and, as far as my observation went (and it was pretty extensive in its range), the nation were sincerely disposed to expect good, to expect a great change for the better, when Mr. Fox and his followers came into power.

The disappointment, however, was certainly the most complete that ever was experienced in the world. As to the pursuing of the war, that was a question of which the public could not so well judge. But of the lavishing of the public money; of the prodigality in sinecures, pensions, and jobs of all sorts, every body could judge. So far were we from seeing any change for the better, that we were soon convinced a change for the worse had taken place. So far from hearing any one measure of Pitt condemned by the *Foxites*; so far from hearing them censure any one of his principles; the *defence* which they constantly set up of their own measures, was, *that they were founded on the principles of Pitt!* And, in conformity with this unparalleled act of apostacy, they unanimously voted a costly statue to his memory, on the express ground of his *public services and virtues*, after having seen him suspend the Habeas Corpus Act for seven years; after having seen him issuing an Order in Council to authorize the refusal of cash-payments at the Bank; after having witnessed the part he had acted in the affairs of Melville and Benfield; after having opposed and voted against the many Bills of Indemnity, with which he died covered: after all this, after having lived to see the mischievous effect of his system, the *Foxites*, without one dissenting voice, voted a costly monument to be erected at the people's expence to commemorate the *public services and public virtues* of this same Pitt!

From this moment all men of sense (and such men only have any weight in fact) who had ever been attached to the *Foxites*, became so much disgusted with them, that it was impossible to meet any such man without hearing his expressions of disgust. The *Whigs* (for so they still called themselves), thinking their power safe, and seeing themselves lost with their former friends, betook them to the making of friends amongst the *Pittites*, who, how-

ever, while they partook of their patronage, waited anxiously for their fall; and, when that fall came, which it did in a very short time, never was public satisfaction more general. I must again (for I have done it before) do Mr. Fox the justice to say, that he went into this coalition with great reluctance. I know this, not only because Mr. WINDHAM told me so; but, because Mr. Fox told me so himself. He most strenuously objected to coalescing with * * * * *, and also to * * * * * being in the Cabinet. But, he was in the days of his old age. He was overcome by his desire to gratify others. He had a long list of hungry expectants at his heels; now, or never, they thought, was the time for them to come in for a share of the pickings; and, they really forced him into that state, out of which he could not get when once entered into it, and the perplexities and shame attendant on which soon brought him to the grave. He keenly felt the compliments of the Pittites, bestowed on him for "treading so exactly in the steps of that great man;" he clearly saw, that he had for ever lost the hearts of his *real* political friends; and, I believe, he was well assured (I was, at any rate), that, if another general election had taken place during his life, he must, at last, have exchanged the City of Westminster for some rotten borough.

If, however, there had still remained the smallest doubt as to the *sameness* of the character and views of the two parties; if there had yet remained some few persons credulous enough to believe, that OPPOSITION was a word that meant any thing more than a body of persons out of place who wanted to get into place; if there had been any one man of sense in the whole kingdom, who still retained the old notion of the OPPOSITION being a body of men acting in defence of the *Country's* rights against the influence of the "*Court*," this last remaining dupe would have had his eyes completely opened in 1809; and especially by the discussion and the result of the discussion on Mr. MADDOCKS's motion against CASTLEREAGH and PERCEVAL in the case of *QUINTIN DICK*, the particulars of which I have detailed to you in No. 5 of this present Volume. This discussion, this vote, decided every thing that remained of indecision upon the question of party.

Since the 12th of May, 1809, there has not been to be found one unbought pen or tongue to pretend, that one of the parties is a straw better or worse than the other. Upon this occasion, it was not an attack upon Castlereagh and Perceval, as *ministers*, that was made by Mr. Maddocks; but, as *practitioners of the System*; and, as was seen by the result of that memorable discussion, though the OUTS were daily assaulting the INS as ministers, they joined them most cordially in repelling an attack against the * * * * *, which, as they well knew, had been practised by themselves, and which they, doubtless, anxiously hoped to have an early opportunity of practising again.

There is a third party, however, which we must not wholly overlook, who are generally silent, but who, on opportune occasions, throw themselves with all their weight into one scale or the other. These persons, who are called (and, as you will by and by see, not without reason) THE SAINTS, have * * * * * at their head. They watch for occasions, when their votes are * * * * *; and thus they act their part.

Besides these, there are three or four, who are called * * * * *, because they generally * * * * * amongst these the most conspicuous is Mr. BANKS, who is unquestionably one of the * * * * * of the whole assembly. For the last quarter of a century, this Gentleman has been * * * * *.

You know, that the SPEAKER of the House of Commons is called the "*First Commoner of England*." The present Speaker, whose name is CHARLES ABBOTT, was bred to the *bar*. He was during the first ministry of Pitt, for a short time, what is called Chief Secretary for Ireland. He is a very small man, but a man with a great deal of that sort of talent, which is wanted in his present capacity. In a day or two after the famous discussion on Mr. Maddocks's motion, in 1809, the Speaker, in a Committee of the whole House, took occasion to utter a very dignified reproof of those who had declared, that the traffic in seats was as notorious as the sun at noon day, "at which declaration," he said, "*our forefathers would have start-*

led with horror," upon which * * * * *

By this time you, in America, will begin to perceive, that you have never before had any thing like a correct notion about parties in this country. When you have been reading what are called the *Debates in the House of Commons*, you have been apt to suppose every man to be a man of weight, whose name you have found forming the left shoulder of a long paragraph in a newspaper. Accordingly you would look upon MR. TIERNEY, MR. BROUGHAM, MR. HORNER, MR. PONSONBY, MR. WILBERFORCE, SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY, &c. as being our great men. This, however, would be a grievous mistake; for, they are neither more nor less than the * * * * *

* * * * *. After this anecdote about Appleby and MR. TIERNEY, you will, I think, want little more to make you see the whole thing in its true light. The people of England, generally speaking, now understand these matters pretty well; but, if I could only say to them what I say to you, they would understand what they ought to do, and that right quickly. And, ought I not to dare to tell it them? Will even a Cossack say, that these things ought not to be proclaimed from the house top? Will even a Cossack Priest say, that a man ought to be imprisoned and fined for telling the world facts of this public nature, and of such great interest to the people?

Such being the *Political Parties* in England, you will not be surprized that people of sense pay no attention to them. The Parties themselves, however, are incessant in their efforts, through their newspapers, to keep up the idea of a *Whig Party* and a *Ministerial Party*, opposed to each other upon *political principle*. In these vehicles of deception the party men carry on their wars; and, any of you, who happen to read these prints, must think them perfectly in earnest. You know nothing of this *sham fighting*. Your Republican and your Cossack prints deal their blows at each other in *sincerity*. The great ability which your writers display is drawn forth generally by honest feeling. The Cossacks, though some of them must, one would think, be corrupt, are, at any rate, *in earnest*. Whereas our party writers carry on a deliberate *sham hostility*. They meet as friends; live upon

the most intimate and friendly footing; they sometimes previously arrange their parts; they get rich, and laugh at their employers and the world. In the midst of their wars, in the very heat of the very hottest of their battles, only let them perceive any one attacking the *System itself*, and instantly both parties, though seemingly at work to tear each other to pieces, quit their hold, and fasten upon the common enemy.

The defeat of the Ministers in the case of the Income Tax was hailed by the Whigs as a symptom of a change of ministry; but, they soon found themselves deceived; they soon found, that it was not for them that the people made a stir, and that a majority appeared on their side. The truth is, that this tax was rejected by a majority of the * * * * * themselves, some of whom went against the Ministry upon this particular occasion, because the tax was so much taken from them. But, they go no farther, if you please, Messrs. Whigs! They want the army and the other good things as much as the Ministry want them.

From what has been said in this and former Numbers, you will clearly see, that no material improvement can take place in our affairs, without a *Reform in the Representation*. Formerly, the people used to expect good, from time to time, from a *change of ministry*. They used to look forward to such changes with great expectations. But, since the days, in which the Cannings and Huskissons and Roses have flourished, that sort of expectation has been wholly done away; and now there is no man, who, at any time, wishes for a change of Ministry, unless he expects to get something by it. At the last contested election for Hampshire, when asked for my vote, my answer was, that I should certainly not give myself the trouble to go to Winchester for any such silly purpose, it being a matter of perfect indifference to me, whether my cherries were eaten by the Jays or by the Magpies; and, when I said this, I expressed the sentiment of every independent man of sense in the county.

Therefore there are many thousands of persons, who are anxious to obtain a Reform in the Representation. This is, indeed, a party opposed to the Ministry, but not less opposed to the Opposition. As to great principles of politics we are

divided into these two parties: one for a Reform, the other against it. The Reformers have been called Jacobins, Levelers, Republicans, French-faction, Democrats, and Traitors. Yet, we have never even *talked* of any thing but obtaining the power of electing, *by the people*, those who *call themselves the representatives of the people*. No reformer has ever proposed to touch the powers and prerogatives of the King; no one has ever proposed to diminish the privileges of the Peers; no one has ever proposed to meddle with the affairs of the Church. We desire to make no change in the form of the government or in the fundamental laws of the land. We say, that every man of us, who is really free from any sort of bondage, and who is unstained with any infamous crime, has a right to vote in the choosing of those, whose will is to decide the fate of his property and his life; and we say, that every man deprived of this right, call him what you will, is, in fact, *a slave*.

We say, that, for the want of such a system, we see perjury, bribery, and corruption ranging at large throughout the country; and, we say that a restoration to such a system of representation is a right, which besides the claims of justice, the ancient laws of our country give us. We contend, that these laws provide for *annual* parliaments; and, if we are told (as we sometimes are) to observe, that even *you* elect your House of Representatives for *two* years, we reply, that you also elect your Chief Magistrate and your Senate, and that you have no established Church. All these are stationary, and the two former hereditary with us, while our Church is of itself a great power, always on the side of the Aristocracy and the Crown. We contend, therefore, that a House of Commons, chosen annually, is necessary to the maintenance of our rights and liberties.

You will ask, perhaps, what can be said against a proposition so reasonable, so fair, so unquestionably just; and, especially after the repeated declarations of Old Lord Chatham, Fox, Lord Grey, Pitt, &c. Pitt having solemnly declared, that, until the House of Commons was reformed, "it was *impossible* for an *honest* man to be a *minister* in England." The truth is, that no *argument* is ever made use of against the propo-

sition. Mere *abuse* is frequently resorted to; but, there are so many persons, who have an interest in the continuation of the present system; and all the corporate, collegiate, ecclesiastical, civil, military, and other legal authorities and channels are so completely connected in feeling with the system, that there are no great rallying points; there is nobody to give the application for reform such a consistency as to make it of weight, and to press it forward with energy. Sir FRANCIS BURDETT, Mr. MADDOCKS, and one or two others, have invariably and most nobly stood forward in this cause. The former, at the expence of, probably, a hundred thousand pounds, added to an imprisonment in the Tower, whither he was sent by the majority of that very Perceval, whom Mr. Maddocks accused before the same House, only a few months before*, has never ceased to call for a reform as the only means of public good. He has, in various ways, made great efforts in the cause, and, by his eloquence, joined to the universal acknowledgement of his integrity and disinterestedness, backed by that weight which ancient family and large estates seldom fail to carry with them, he has certainly produced a very great and lasting effect in favour of that change, to produce which has really been the labour of his life. Out of the House, MAJOR CARTWRIGHT has spent more than 40 years in this same cause; and, at the age of 76, he still pursues his object with all the zeal of youth and the talent of the prime of life.

But, great as are the character and talents and zeal of these Gentlemen, they are but *two*, at last, in a country which has more than a thousand families with hereditary titles, and whose government has 60 millions a year passing through its hands. In such a state of things how are the *people* to make a way for their claim? Would they meet in a County? Who are the authorities there? The Lord Lieutenant, the Sheriff, the Justices of the Peace, the Clergy, and all these, except a part of the latter, are directly appointed by the Ministry; that is to say, by those at whose nod the ministers them-

* See No. 5 of the present Volume for a full account of the memorable proceedings of 11th and 12th of May, 1809.

selves hold their places and emoluments and patronage. Would the people meet in a town, or city? There is the *Corporation*. Would they meet in a *Borough*? Oh, no! Thus, then, while there is the great and terrible weight of the 60 million, government and that of the tenancy under the aristocracy, against the rallying of the people, every creature in authority, and every mode of assembling for ordinary purposes, presents an additional impediment to the cause of reform.

There has been formed a society, called the *Hampden Club*, the object of which is said to be to further the cause of reform. To this Club Sir FRANCIS BURDETT and the venerable and virtuous Cartwright belong. But, if we are to judge of a plan by its *effects*, this Club has, as yet, carried no very high title to public praise. *Ten thousand pounds* expended by this Club in the distribution of publications, and a meeting in every county in the kingdom, which the members of this Club might easily effect, would make Corruption extremely uneasy. But nothing good will ever be done by meeting and *talking* about what they are to *talk* about when they meet next time. To say the truth, I, for my part, expect nothing from this Club; and I am of opinion, that, whenever reform comes, and come it must, it will come through the Bank of England. If that famous Old Lady had but gone on as she was going three or four months ago. If she had brought wheat down to 4s. a bushel, and kept it there for 18 months or two years, I would have insured the HAMPDEN CLUB a parliamentary reform without the smallest degree of assistance from them. But, her Ladyship has relaxed; she is again to be protected for two years; she will again send forth her paper; and, already, upon the bare prospect, wheat has risen from 6s. to 10s. a bushel; and, in all probability, we shall see it at 15s. a bushel in less than three months!

Thus, you see, that it is still the old question: *shall the people choose those who tax them, or shall they not?* People may talk as long as they please about the means of making this country prosperous and contented; but, it never will be, and never can be, either the one or the other, till this question is settled upon just grounds. If, indeed, the proposition was

to make a change in the kind of government; if, looking across the Atlantic, we were to propose *your* way of making the country prosperous and happy, it might, and not without good reason, be said, that we were *schemers*, and that we were attempting to apply here what was only applicable in a wholly different state of society. But, we are for *nothing new*; we want to *destroy no lawful thing*; we want to do no more than remove *notorious abuses*, notorious violations of the laws of our country; we only want to rescue ourselves from a state, in which we have nothing to say in the disposal of our property and our persons. And, will any Cossack assert that we are Jacobins because we entertain this wish? Will any Cossack assert, that we are traitors, because we wish to put an end to the most scandalous scenes of bribery, corruption, venality and perjury that ever disfigured and disgraced a people? Faith! a Cossack may be ready to say this; for, our *Saints* are ready to say it, and to swear it too, if you will hold them the book.

Such being the real state of *parties* in England, you will be able to judge (if you pay attention to this statement) of the prospect which we have before us. But, above all things, you will take care never to look upon an English *Lawyer* as a *patriot*. We have never yet had one single lawyer, who has not, sooner or later, become a decided supporter of the System, and, we have seldom had one, who, after riding into power on the shoulders of the populace, has not become a most bitter persecutor of freedom. With you the matter is essentially different. Your *poor* government has no *Silk Gowns* and *Commissionerships* and fat *Offices in Colonies* and a thousand other things which our *rich* government has. For a man to thrive as a lawyer in your country, he must not only understand the law, but be able well to urge his client's rights. Your lawyers must, at any rate, *have clients*; whereas the far greater part of ours have none, and never had, never will have, and never wish to have any, and are frequently much more successful than those who have clients. A very considerable part (the greater half) of our barristers are looking for office, or enjoying office, under the government. In short, there are even now 60 or 70 millions a year raised in

taxes, and it is very hard if the lawyers do not get their full share.

For some time past our principal ministers have chiefly been lawyers: Pitt, Dundas, Addington, Perceval, Vansittart *, and many more; and as to the Chief Clerks and Secretaries, the *bar*, the prolific bar, supplies them in shoals. Between the bar and an office there frequently intervenes a period of *authorship* of some sort. The wig and gown accommodate themselves wonderfully to the duties of Critic, Editor, Paragraph-grinder, Pamphleteer, * * * * * and * * * *. Thus a regular supply is kept up by a kind of system resembling that of succession-crops in well-managed gardens. The seedling lawyer remains in the beds of the Inns of Court till he acquires a sufficient stock of brass and loquacity. Removed to the more active scenes of the press, he generally obtains by the bustle, puffing and noise that he makes, some share of notoriety; and, if he discovers little talent, he seldom fails to discover less principle, which is the best of all possible recommendations. His next step is an office, and if he can raise the money, * * * * *
* * * * * If he once gets in here, he soon takes root in the * * * * *
* * * * * and happy is the man who lives to see him eradicated. We are often told, that lawyers are *like other men*. They *would* be like other men. They are like other men naturally, as swords are *naturally* like other pieces of steel, or, as cocks with steel spurs on are *naturally* like other cocks. But, if the mode and principles and views of their education be different from those of other men, they will be and must be unlike other men.

I do not here, however, speak of *all* our lawyers. There are some very learned, and most diligent and upright men; men who only look to their profession, fairly practised, for their elevation in life. But, as to the great mass, they are what I have just described them; and, certainly, a greater curse has seldom afflicted a country. Before those who have power, they fawn like Spaniels, or crouch like Setters; when they have power at their back, they are bold and remorseless as Bull-Dogs; while, upon all occasions, they are crafty as Foxes. Where education for the bar is, generally speaking, education for office under the government, what chance can

any man stand in a contest against that government? This is amongst the evils of the system, under which we live, and it is by no means one of the least. However, this is an evil, to which you will never be exposed, so long as your government continues what it now is.

WM. COBBETT.

THE AMERICAN PACKET.

No. I.

Botley, 6th April, 1816.

DEAR JOHN BULL,

I some time ago observed, that it was my intention to make, as far as I was able, the two nations, the English and the Americans, *well acquainted with each other*, it being my opinion, that nothing was so likely to be really useful to both. In order to be able to do this, I have taken measures for obtaining early and correct information from America; my plan of correspondence has been settled with great care, and it is now just beginning to operate.

You have, my dear John, been sadly cajoled for a great many years; you have been made to believe, that it was necessary for you to spend 25 thousand millions, in order to *save your property*, and to prevent your religion from being *taken out of your very heart*. In fact, you now see yourself, after all your toil and sacrifices, reduced to *ruin* by a war, the effect, and the only striking effect, of which has been to restore the Bourbons, whom you always called despots; to restore the Pope, whom you always called the scarlet whore of Babylon; to restore the Inquisition, the very name of which used to make your blood run cold; and to enable the Bourbons to put to death, to imprison, or to banish, the brave Frenchmen, who

had fought or written or spoke, in the cause of that liberty, the very sound of which was formerly so delightful to an English ear.

Therefore, John, this is the season to call upon you to reflect, and to endeavour to turn your eyes towards a country inhabited by men, who are really free, who proceed, generally speaking, from the same stock with yourself, who speak the same language, who have the same common law, who, like you, poke their bowsprits into every port in the world, who stir about like you in all sorts of affairs, who, like you, have a score or two of religions, who are pretty nearly as proud as yourself (and, at present, with much better reason) who talk like you, write like you, and fight like you; and, who, in short, resemble you in almost every thing, except that, they are not, like you, to be gulled out of their money, and to be induced to forge chains wherewith to enable

Pray, my dear John, do not suffer the corrupt knaves of the press to make you believe any longer, that it is France and the Continent of Europe, to which your eyes ought to be directed. You have no business in France or in Germany. You can learn nothing there. Come with me, John, and take a look at America. In one sense I am glad, that the people there are at three thousand miles distance from you; but, in another, I wish they were near enough for you to see them and hear them talk. To bring you as close to them as possible shall be my object; and, if you will but read me with attention, I will teach you more useful knowledge than you have ever yet possessed. It is the business of our *writing knaves* to keep you in the dark with regard to this great and prosperous country. It shall be my business to open your eyes.

Now, let me, before I proceed a step further, caution you against giving way to

that *envy*, to which you are so liable. Do not suppose, that, because I am about to hold out the *example* of America to England, that I prefer another country to my own. If a man bid his son look at the good behaviour of some other young man, do we hence conclude, that he does not love that son so well as he ought? This would be a very perverse mode of reasoning indeed; but, not more perverse than it would be to suppose, that I prefer America to England, because I wish the latter to profit from the bright example of the former. I see my country in misery; in a state of shocking degradation, and hastening fast to decay. I hear this now acknowledged by the law-makers themselves. I wish to see it in a different state. I am uneasy at seeing myself surrounded by ruined neighbours and increasing paupers. And, am I acting a part unworthy a true Englishman in endeavouring to shew my countrymen, in the example of America, what are some, at any rate, of the means of rescuing themselves from present misery and of guarding themselves against its return at any future period?

And, why should we Englishmen *envy* the Americans? They are no rivals of ours. It is impossible for them to prosper without our sharing in the prosperity, if we act wisely and justly towards them. In no possible circumstances can they do us any *real* injury. It is *possible*, that in *time*, they may spread their power over *colonies* that we now claim; but, with reflecting men, the holding of those colonies is, at least, a *doubtful good* to us, while the seizing of them would give no real advantage to the Americans. With this little, strong, compact country of ours, situated as it is, and inhabited by so laborious and brave a people, what have we to *fear*? Why should we fret and teaze ourselves with the anticipation of dangers, at which, if we would open our eyes, nature herself would bid us laugh? Shall neither we nor

our children ever know five years of real peace? Must we always be kept on the look-out for somebody to fight with? But, above all things, is it not horrible to think of, that two nations of common origin, and whose harmonious intercourse is calculated to preserve the peace of the whole world, and to extend light, liberty, and happiness to every corner of the earth; is it not horrible to reflect, that two such nations should, to gratify the malice and avarice of artful knaves, be made to believe, that the destruction of the one is necessary to the safety of the other? Pray, John, believe no such thing. Hear with patience what I tell you about America; and, you will not find me a flatterer of her any more than of you. I shall convey to you the intelligence I receive, and, I shall not fail to point out what I deem to be her follies, errors, or faults.

The ignorance that prevails in England, with regard to the Republic of America, is quite surprising. A tradesman asked me the other day, whether the Americans had not a king. A young man, also a tradesman and a very respectable one, asked me, last summer, whether there were yet any *Inns* or *Shops* in America; and, as he intended to go to Philadelphia soon, he asked me whether he could, upon his landing, get a lodging readily and buy victuals. This is very strange, but it is strictly true. This young man came from Winchester, and when I told him, that there were *twenty times* as many people in Philadelphia as in Winchester, and that the worst street in the former was finer than the main street of the latter, he stared at me with astonishment.

To become a mere *geographer* of the United States is what I cannot consent to; but, some account of the *government* and *political affairs* of that country seems necessary here, in order that the transactions, of which I shall have to speak, may be understood by my English readers in

general, very few of whom, though exceedingly well informed in most other respects, appear not to know any thing on this subject.

The Government of the United States consists of a *President*, elected for four years; a *Senate* also elected for four years, parts of it going out in rotation; and a *House of Representatives* elected for two years. The regulations for the conducting of the business of making laws are nearly like those of our parliament; and, the President, like our king, is the Executive Officer. The three together are called the *Congress*. There is a monstrous difference in the detail of the powers there and here. But this is enough, for the present, in the way of description so far. *The whole are elected by the people at large*, with some little difference in the qualifications of the electors, in different States, and with some regulations as to intermediate elections, or choosing by delegates. But, substantially, the whole of the Congress is chosen by the people, every man paying taxes having a vote.

Besides this, which is called the *General Government*, there is a government in each of the *States*, which government has at its head a Chief Magistrate, called a *Governor*, and it has also a Legislature of its own. These State Governments pass laws and make regulations for the several States; but, as to all matters of commerce or external revenue, and as to all *foreign matters*, they have no power; consequently they have nothing to do in deciding upon questions of *peace* or *war*, which belong solely to the general government. There are some differences in the qualifications of the electors in different States; but, generally and substantially speaking, there is no power of *making laws* or *raising money*, which is not derived directly from the voice of the people, and which does not revert to them again at the end of a very short period.

As to *religion*, there is no *established Church* in America. There are all sorts of *religions* there, just as there are here, Church people, Presbyterians, Quakers, Methodists, Roman Catholics, and every other sort. The people are full as religious as they are in England. They are just as ready to start *new sects* and *new notions* about religion; and, in this particular, the Country is, in fact, still an English Colony. There can no new thing about religion spring up in England, but away it goes to be greedily adopted in the United States. Sunday-Schools, Bible Societies, Lancaster Schools, Religious Tracts; any thing; no matter what it is, or from whom it proceeds, or from what motive it originates here. It is sure to be received in that country, and to run like wild-fire. Then the people there follow close upon our heels in all the *humanity schemes*. There are all sorts of *Societies* for charitable purposes. Lying-in-women Societies, and, I am afraid, there is even a *Magdalen-Society*, or something very much like it. Not having any, or scarcely any, *real* misery or pauperism in the Country, the people there (who must have every thing in the *humanity* way that we have) seem to have formed a resolution to create for themselves, under one appellation or another, a becoming retinue of paupers. And, the best part of the thing, as a joke, is, that the persons, in America, who take the lead in all these matters, are, most probably persons of *real* humanity, and are moved by a sincere desire to do good to their fellow creatures; while, in England, they consist chiefly of some of the most profligate persons of the age. I have looked over the lists of the "*Bible Society*" and of the "*Society for the Suppression of Vice*" and have marked with my pen the names of *ninety-five* men, who are notorious for bribery and corruption, or for some other most daring

offence against good morals. But, it is so well known a fact, that these Societies have sprung out of hypocrisy and fraud, that it would be useless to dwell longer upon them. They serve to amuse an ignorant and credulous multitude, and that is the sole object which their founders and supporters, in general, have in view.

With the exception of this instance of most scandalous folly, which I never can excuse even on the ground of that feeling of kindness out of which it has sprung, the Americans are truly a wise people; they are all, or nearly all, if natives of that country, able to read and write; they are, in general, well informed as to the main principles and even the details of law and justice; they understand well their civil and political rights and duties, and while they watch over and defend the former with the greatest vigilance and resolution, they most cheerfully perform the latter. In no country upon earth are there so few instances of breaches of the peace. It is a country where no one is a respecter of *persons*, and where every one is a respecter of the *law*.

But it is to the *political parties* in America, that I wish to call your particular attention; for, without knowing something of the origin and progress of these, you will not be able to comprehend clearly a great deal of the information, which it will be my object to convey to you. You see, in our news-papers, the words *Federalist* and *Republican* and *Democrat*; but, it is impossible for you, without explanation, to know what they mean; and yet, it is of very great importance, that you should know this; for, as you will see, in the sequel, the real cause of the late war between this country and America was not wholly unconnected with this history of political parties.

When the first American War was brought to a close, and America had

gained the recognition of her Independence, it became necessary to form a General Government, capable of preserving that Independence by binding all the separate States together, and capable of managing the affairs of the whole as far as related to foreign nations. A Convention met for this purpose. Different men had different notions of the sort of government that ought to be formed; but, the assembly, consisting, perhaps, of as many wise men as ever were assembled upon any occasion in the world, may be considered as being divided into two parties. One for giving *very little* power to the General Government; and the other for giving it a *great deal*. One for making it as *democratical* as possible; and the other for approaching pretty nearly to *kingship and aristocracy*. As there was nobody to use bribery and corruption, and as every man really wished to do what was best for the country, a spirit of moderation at last prevailed, and the government, such as it now is, was agreed on, and went into execution, General Washington being, soon afterwards, chosen as the first President.

Just after this General Government went into operation, the Revolution in France broke out. The two parties in America took their sides, for and against, with wonderful aptness and regularity. The Aristocrats against, and the Democrats for, and, perhaps, these wordy contests in America exceeded in violence those in England. By and by England was at war with the Republicans of France. The parties then took one the side of England and the other the side of France. And, from that moment to the close of the war, and even to this moment, the Aristocrats (what there is left of them) have been upholding the cause of England, or, rather, of the English Government.

The Aristocrats took the name of *Federalists*, from being, as they said, friends

of the Federal, or General Government. The other party have called themselves *Republicans*; and these appear now to be the settled appellations. The horrid acts, committed in France, during the first years of the revolution, alienated many good people from the cause of the revolution itself, and, for some years, gave a Federalist in America a decided ascendancy over the Republicans. They had, besides, the amazing advantage of having the *name*, at least, of GENERAL WASHINGTON to aid them. Mr. ADAMS succeeded General Washington in 1797; war was actually begun against France, owing, in a great measure to the folly and insolence of the Directory, but, not a little to the Federalists. However, this war was soon put an end to by the return of wiser counsels in France; Mr. JEFFERSON was elected instead of Mr. ADAMS in 1801; the Federalists, by this event, were completely ousted, and they have never since been able to regain their lost power and influence. Mr. ADAMS was a wise and most excellent man; a true lover of his country and of the cause of freedom in every country. But, he was beset with a host of very able intriguing men, who had views wholly different from his. *He* was afraid of the destruction of liberty from the spirit of innovation; *they* were in hopes of rearing an aristocracy under the pretence of such a fear. *He* has given the best proof of his sincerity by cordially supporting the measures of his successful rival; *they* have given the best proof of their hypocrisy and their selfish views by opposing those measures, be they what they might, even at the manifest risk of the independence of their country.

The numerous hostile, or demi-hostile, acts of our government towards America, and especially the impressment of their seamen on the high seas, no man has ever

attempted seriously to justify ; nor is there any Englishman of any reputation who would venture to hazard that reputation by putting his name to an attempt at such a justification. All that has ever been done, on this side of the water, is to use evasions and palliatives ; to plead necessity ; and to express regret at that necessity. But, in America, the Federalists justified the thing, and, when their own government threatened to go to war to obtain redress, or rather to defend its seamen, the Federalists actually gave the cue to our news-paper writers and others to accuse that government of *wishing to aid Napoleon*, the effect produced by which is notorious. It was *this charge* against the American Government, which made the war popular in England. It was implicitly believed, that, the American government had taken advantage of our danger *to join Napoleon in the war against us*. The *real* cause of the war was kept out of sight. The people never heard it ; and, after a while, would not hear it. Our news-papers very artfully and wickedly copied the charge against the American government, and sent it forth, day after day, in the form of "*Extracts from American Papers* ;" and, when the falshood had once sunk into the public mind, it was impossible to remove it. Thus, we owe to these gentlemen fifty millions, at least, of our Debt. I wish we owed it them in the literal sense of the word !

But, if their conduct was thus wicked before the war, what shall we say to their conduct *during* the war ? All the means they made use of to embarrass the Gene-

ral Government, to assist the enemy, to prevent the people from making exertions in defence of the country ; to record these would require volumes. But, the *Hertford Convention* must not pass without particular notice. Its object unquestionably was to effect a division of the Union, unless the government gave way to the Federalists. To pretend that it could have any other object would be downright hypocrisy. The government, kept steadily on its march. It relied upon the good sense and public spirit and valour of the people. It had neither guards nor spies nor suspended laws to protect it. The country was invaded at many points ; large tracts of territory had been taken possession of in the name of our king ; mighty fleets loaded with troops hovered on the coast ; England, with her renowned army and all her tremendous power, had no other enemy ; and the finances of America were in a state of the utmost derangement : And, *this* was the moment, when a Convention of Delegates from the four Eastern States met at Hertford to overawe the President and the two Houses of Congress. We all remember the *hopes*, which the meeting of these men excited. It was, at one time, positively asserted, that they had resolved on a division of the Union ; and, I never shall be made to believe, that *some assurances of that sort had not been given in this quarter of the world*. But, at any rate, what mischief were these men doing their country, if their conduct only gave rise to such an opinion *here* ! Are such deeds as this to be ascribed to, and excused upon the ground of, mere *party spirit* ? I know of

nothing that can be urged even in palliation of such a deed.

However, this diabolical project failed, and free government was not doomed to be swept from the face of the earth. The American arms taught us that nothing but disgrace was to be gained in the contest; our government hastened to make peace, be the motive what it might; and the Delegates from Hertford arrived at the City of Washington with the result of their deliberations, just about the time that the news of *peace* arrived from GHENT and that of *victory* from New Orleans!

It would be wonderful indeed, if any political party could, in any country, live long under disgrace like this, and, accordingly, the *Federalists* appear, from the last intelligence that I have received, to be fallen into great contempt. It will be very long before an aristocratical faction will again rear its head in America. But, it ought to be observed here, that it was not the *whole body* of Federalists, who went to these monstrous lengths. Perhaps not a twentieth part of them. The great mass of men, who passed under that appellation, were always, as far as my observation went, very sincere friends of freedom, but thought that some little distinction of rank might be necessary in a great and rich community. This was a point, upon which men might honestly differ. Nay, men may be excused for doing very violent things against political rivals. But, when the enemy is *in the country*; when the question clearly is *unanimity*, or *slavery*; then to attempt to divide is nothing short of treason, and *real* treason too, against one's native land.

I should have observed as I went along,

that, as there is an old saying, that no very great mischief ever was done without a *priest* having had a hand in it, so it really happened here; for, the priests, or presbyterians, or whatever else they may be called in New England, appear to have had much to do in all these aristocratical proceedings. New England consists of the four States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Connecticut. There is no *reason* for this appellation of *New England* now, seeing that it is unknown in the language of the *laws*. This part of the Union was more particularly peopled from England than any other part. Not having any extent of back country, they have received less mixture from emigration. There is a wonderful power in *traditionary habits* and in mere *names*. The New Englanders celebrate the anniversary of the landing of their forefathers at a place called *Portsmouth*. It must be a great minded man indeed, who can wholly get out of him what he has sucked in with his mother's milk. These things have weight with men without their knowing it themselves. Be this as it may, it is very certain, that the people of this part of the Union always talk of *New England* even to apparent affectation. Far be it from me to find fault with this. I should be the most unhappy wretch that ever lived, if I thought, that a great grandchild of mine would hate England; but, gentlemen Federalists and Priests of New England, though we shall be happy to hear that you love the *country* of your forefathers, we must beg you to believe, that we feel very little flattered by your procession and thanksgivings for the entrance of the Cossacks into Paris and for the re-

storation of the Bourbons, whom our common ancestors held in abhorrence as despots; and that we by no means rejoice at any event, in any part of the world, that tends to deprive us of the hope of seeing all nations as free as you are. We humbly presume to believe, with all due deference to your Reverences and Worships, that we know the true interests of Old England as well, pretty nearly, as you do, and that we have as sincere a regard for her happiness and her honour; and we venture to assure you, that we are fully persuaded, that if you had succeeded in over-setting the government of your country, it would have been the most fatal blow that Old England ever received.

I have said, that there is no *established church* in the United States; but, in the States called New England, there is a *law*, I believe, still existing, which compels people to *pay* towards the support of *some sort of priest or other*; and, as all the priests, or the greater part of them, are of one sort, this is a species of hierarchy. *All hierarchies* took the alarm at the proceedings of the French revolutionists. To tell men, that they might live and die without priests of any kind was not to be forgiven; and, accordingly, the Priesthood of New England seem to have imbibed a most implacable enmity to the French republicans, though the ancestors of the New Englanders were republicans themselves. The moment the French Revolutionists declared against

religion, they were called *atheists*. Atheist is an ugly name. It is like "*mad-dog*." And, as the atheists were also *republicans*, atheism and republicanism were very soon used by the enemies of the revolution as synonymous terms; and, as the English government was at war against the French, it was called, especially by the Aristocrats of New England, "*the Bulwark of religion*."

Thus have I given you, John Bull, a sketch of the *political character* of the United States of America. I shall, in future Numbers, have to shew you in what manner this truly republican government acts; how it is carried on; how it manages the affairs of the people who have chosen it; what its expences are; what is the situation of the people under it. I intend, in short, to enable you to compare the acts and effects of a government, *chosen by the people*, with the acts and effects of your own government. I shall also, from time to time, inform you of the state of parties and of public opinions in the United States; this being a matter of much greater importance to you than can possibly be any thing that takes place in France, or on any part of the Continent of Europe. Having thus opened the series, I conclude this first Number in the hope that I have awakened your attention to what the future Numbers are intended to contain.

WM. COBBETT.